

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 CFR § 1.116  
Serial No. 09/865,466

### REMARKS

A total of 65 claims remain in the present application. The foregoing amendments are presented in response to the Office Action mailed July 9, 2004, wherefore reconsideration of this application is requested.

By way of the above-noted amendments, independent claims 1, 27 and 53 have been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 6, 32 and 54, respectively, which have now been cancelled. Consequential amendments have been made in claims 7, 12, 20, 33, 38, 46, 55, 57 and 58 to adjust claim dependencies in view of the cancellation of claims 6, 32 and 54.

In preparing the above-noted amendments, careful attention was paid to ensure that no new subject matter has been introduced.

Referring now to the text of the Office Action:

- claims 1-2, 4-5, 14-19, 27-28, 30-31, 40-45 and 53 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over the teaching of United States Patent No. 4,776, 032 (Odate et al);
- claims 3 and 29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over the teaching of United States Patent No. 4,776, 032 (Odate et al) in view of United States Patent No. 4,754,495 (Kawano); and
- claims 6-13, 20-26, 32-39, 46-52, 54-68 are objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

As an initial matter, applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 6-13, 20-26, 32-39, 46-52, 54-68. The Examiners claim rejections are believed to be traversed by the above-noted claim amendments, and further in view of the following discussion.


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Claims 1, 27 and 53 have been amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowable claims 6, 32 and 54, and thus are now believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 6, 32 and 54 have been cancelled as redundant in view of amended claims 1, 27 and 53, and the remaining claims amended, as appropriate, to adjust claim dependencies. Thus all of claims 1-5, 7-31 and 33-68 are now believed to be in condition for allowance and early action in that respect is courteously solicited.

It should be noted that Applicant does not intend to make or imply any admissions concerning the patentability of original claims 1, 27 and 53 in view of the references cited by the Examiner. The foregoing amendments are being made solely in order to expedite issuance of a patent in the present case, in view of the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in certain claims. Applicant reserves the right to file a continuation application directed to the subject matter of at least original claims 1-5, 14-19, 27-31, 40-45 and 53 prior to issuance of a patent in the present case.

If any extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is required to obtain entry of this response, such extension is hereby respectfully requested. If there are any fees due under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17 which are not enclosed herewith, including any fees required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, please charge such fees to our Deposit Account No. 19-5113.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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